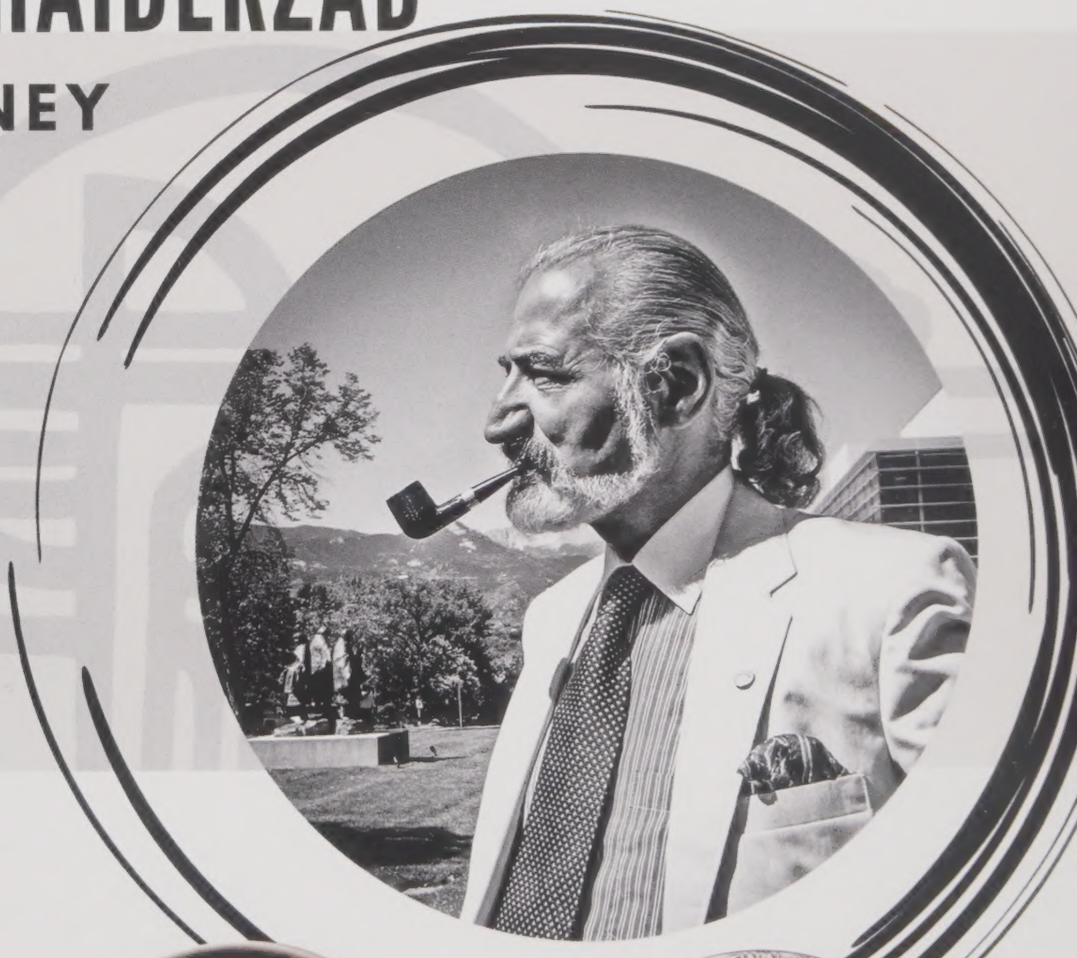
MEMBERS EXCHANGE

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF
THE AMERICAN MEDALLIC SCULPTURE ASSOCIATION

2022 Vol. 41 ISSUE 3

AMANULLAH HAIDERZAD

A LONG JOURNEY



"I love my Mother. She was my teacher and biggest supporter of my career. When figurative sculpture was not allowed, my parents made it possible for me."

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Readers,

As we head into fall we are looking forward to joining forces once again with our international colleagues and friends for FIDEM 2023 in Florence, Italy. Now is the time to ready your submissions and begin to think ahead to travel arrangements. Watch your email for details from our American delegates Jeanne Stevens-Sollman and Jim Licaretz. I'm hoping to see you all in person and face to face.

In this issue we are proud to honor the long and distinguished career of Professor Amanullah Haiderzad on the occasion of his award, the 2022 Numismatic Art Award for Excellence in Medallic Sculpture, from the American Numismatic Association (ANA). I have had the pleasure of visiting Amanullah a number of times and can personally say he is one of the most gracious and kind gentlemen I've ever met. He is a true artist in deeds and spirit.

AMSA is certainly not a solitary organization. We enjoy a great deal of cross over affiliation with several other orgs including ANA - American Numismatic Association, ANS - American Numismatic Society, NSS - National Sculpture Society, MCA - Medal Collectors of America, MASC - Medallic Art Society of Canada and the International Art Medal Federation - FIDEM. Along with Amanullah Haiderzad's award, we have two other AMSA members, George Guhaj and Mel Wacks who were also awarded by the ANA this year. Congratulations!

I'd also like to congratulate long-time AMSA member and key figure in the art medal field, Robin Salmon for her recent Medal of Honor recognition from the National Sculpture Society.

Our Members Exchange editor, Aayush Sharma, will be taking a hiatus in order to pursue his Master's Degree. We thank him for all his hard work to keep this Exchange looking sharp.

In the meantime, I'll be stepping in as his replacement as main editor. Typos can be reported to Hannibal in the Complaint Department.

Be well and stay creative,

Heidi Wastweet

PROFESSOR AMANULLAH HAIDERZAD

Heidi Wastweet

August 2021, as the Taliban paraded the streets of Kabul, across all of Afghanistan and our daily news, to stake their claim as the country's new rulers, there was one small but important building that quietly closed its doors indefinitely. The Haiderzad Museum of Modern Art. The lifelong dream of artist Amanullah Haiderzad, seemingly overnight became yet another cultural victim of an exhausting war. Not only the life's work of Haiderzad, but a trove of donated art medals by artists around the world, including many from AMSA.

Now, just over a year later, Amanullah writes: "As you are well aware, the situation in Afghanistan deteriorates on a daily basis. The current barbaric regime has decided not to permit girls from continuing their education, they have closed schools, including art schools; therefore, the future of the country and its people appears extremely bleak. Unfortunately, education, art and culture are on a standstill status for most education seekers and art students. It is a very dark day in my beloved homeland.

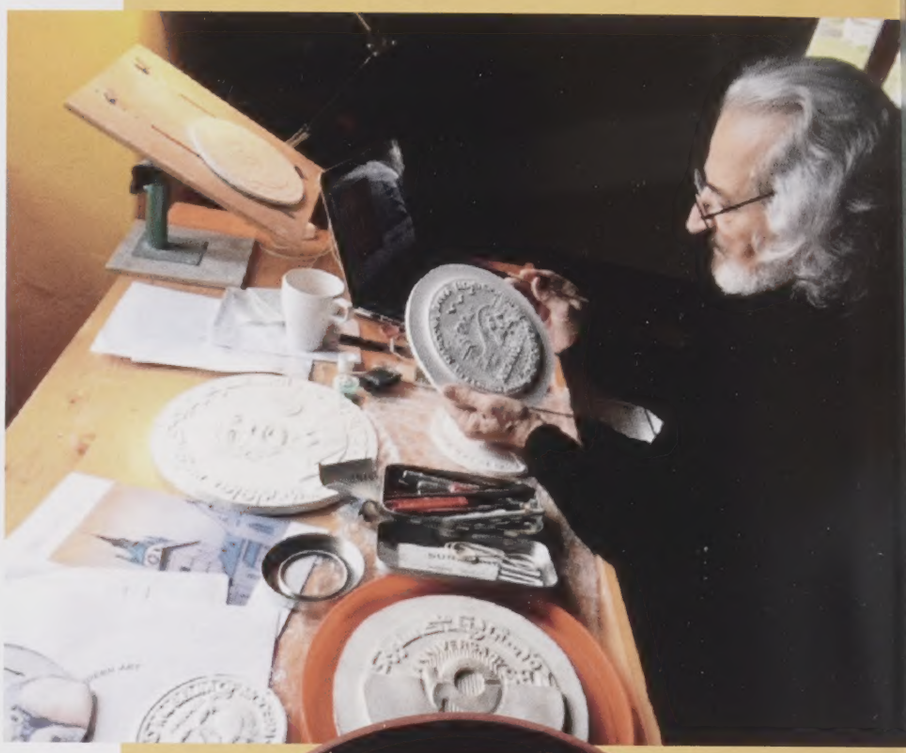
The Taliban at the museum

Amanullah surrounded by students and museum visitors in happier times

I wanted to provide a status report about my museum as well all the gorgeous medals which were generously donated by you, for exhibition in my museum. After much discussion with the director of the museum, we have decided that it would be best to move all the medals into a secure location. This decision was made in order to preserve the security of the medals until such time that the political situation normalizes in Afghanistan. Rest assured that all the medals donated by you, as well as my medals, are safe in a secure location.

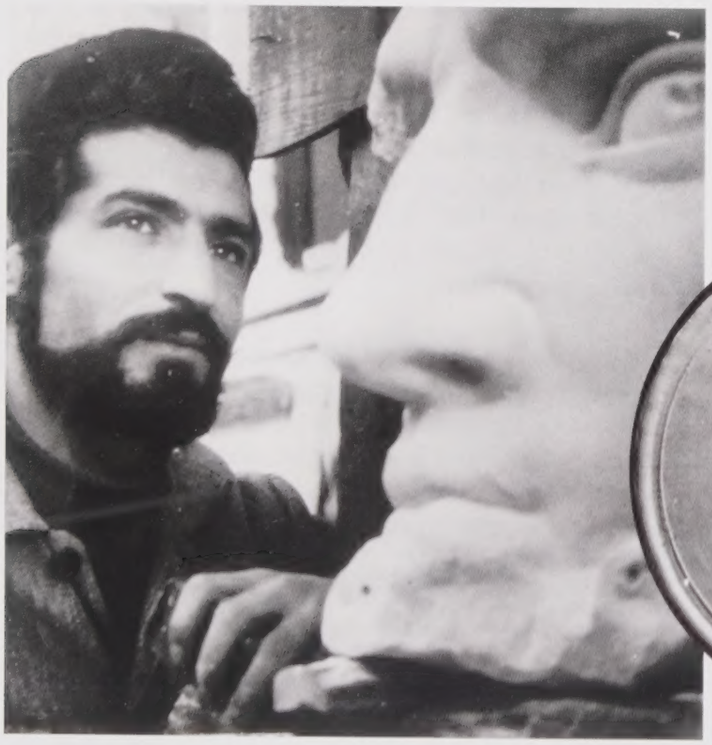
They have reopened ONLY one wing of the museum and they are exclusively exhibiting my Islamic calligraphy. We felt that exhibiting only these specific arts is a safe decision at the present time. I am very hopeful that the political environment in Afghanistan changes in the near future towards a prosperous and positive environment where art and culture is openly educated, displayed and appreciated."

Today, Professor Haiderzad lives and works in a modest apartment in New York City. He is always dressed in a distinguished style and never without a smile. No amount of trauma will stop him from making his art or extinguish the joy he feels with his family.



In 1980 Amanullah escaped from his homeland Afghanistan because of the Russian invasion and finding himself on the wrong side of the Taliban, like so many intellectuals. Under political asylum he came to the United State of America with his wife and three children to start a new life in New York City.

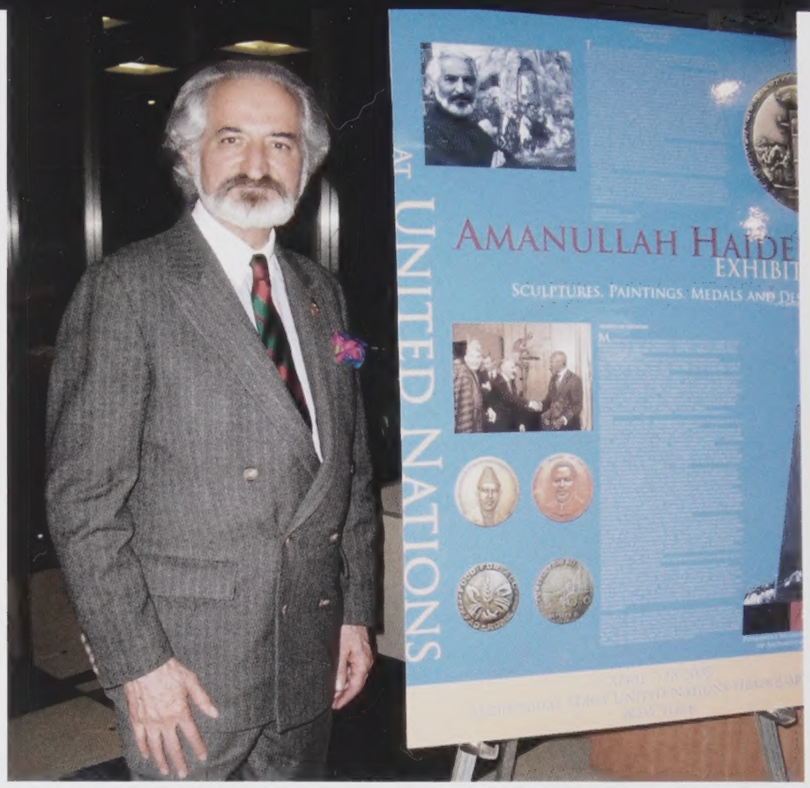
In 1982 he received a small article in the New York Times from his old friend Mr. Jack Coil which invited sculptors who are interested in medallic art to get together to start an organization encouraging the creation and study of Medallic sculpture in New York. Dr. Alan Stahl had chosen for the first meeting location the studio of sculptor Domenico Facci in Manhattan. Amanullah remembers being very excited to join and meet other sculptors. At the same time, he was unhappy that he didn't have any pictures of his art to show them what kind of sculptor he was. Before leaving Afghanistan, he gave all his documents and portfolio to the United Nations officials in Kabul. Instead, he brought with him plaster medals to show.



Even before his 23-year exile, Amanullah thrived in the arts. Born in 1939 in Kabul, from 1959 to 1964 he studied across Italy, including the School of The Art of The Medal at the Italian Mint, on a scholarship from the Italian Government. From 1964 to 1965 he attended the Institute of Fine Arts Carrara in Italy on a scholarship from the Afghan Government. With a scholarship from the John D Rockefeller III Foundation, he earned his M.A. from NYU 1969-1971. He worked as the Chief Executive Officer of the Afghanistan Mint of Kabul. He was founder, Dean and Professor of the Faculty of Fine Arts Kabul University and served as art and culture advisor to President Karzai of Afghanistan. He is a Fellow of the NSS and active with FIDEM. His works are included in the collections of the British Museum, the Smithsonian and the United Nations, among others.

2008 brought a milestone, the first Afghanistan art exhibit at the UN. Still, he could not rest. His ultimate dream was to bring arts education and teachers back to his homeland. "These teachers would be able to share the three decades of experience they've had in democratic societies beyond the borders of Afghanistan. The purpose would be to help bring the light of freedom into the minds of students raised within a world of fundamentalism that most Americans cannot imagine. Art can play an important role in political, social, and economic life. Art is the language of democracy."

After many delays and challenges, he finally went back to Afghanistan and achieved his grand dream to open those museum doors officially in 2016. The doors that are now closed again, but not without hope for the future.



OLD KABUL BAZAAR
for Society of Medalists
1994

ANA AWARDS 2022

AMSA MEMBERS RECOGNIZED AT AMERICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION'S WORLDS FAIR OF MONEY

THE ANA NUMISMATIC ART AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN MEDALLIC SCULPTURE

Honors an artist whose cumulative lifetime achievements in the field of medallic sculpture have been of the highest order.

Amanullah Haiderzad receives his award at the Member Awards and Donor Celebration August 18th

THE SMEDLEY AWARD - to recognize individuals who have devoted their efforts to the betterment of the ANA.

George Cuhaj: A resident of Iola, Wisconsin, Cuhaj is a two-time ANA Summer Seminar instructor, has authored two publications, edited five others and written numerous numismatic articles for publication.

An active member of the American Medallic Sculpture Association for decades, Cuhaj has served as secretary, treasurer, and newsletter editor, as well as two terms as president.

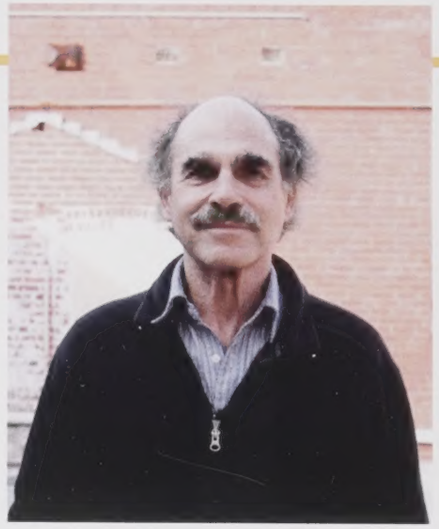
An avid speaker and exhibitor, he has received five first-place awards in four classes at ANA conventions. Notably, Cuhaj organized the ANA's participation at the Coin Collecting Merit Badge booth at the Boy Scouts' national jamboree on numerous occasions over a 30-year period.

Mel Wacks: Since 1968, Jewish-coin authority Mel Wacks has founded or cofounded five organizations related to biblical, Judaic, and Israel numismatics, including the American Israel Numismatic Association and the Jewish-American Hall of Fame.

The Woodland Hills, California resident edited *The Shekel* for five years, authored both the original and 45th anniversary editions of *The Handbook of Biblical Numismatics*, and has contributed innumerable articles to hobby publications. A spirited designer, Wacks has crafted a number of counterstamped coins and medals, including the ANA 1997 convention medal, and he shared his expertise as chair of the ANA Numismatic Art Award for Excellence in Medallic Sculpture Committee for 10 years.

MICHAEL MESZAROS EXHIBIT

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS AS A SCULPTOR



Michael has shown a retrospective exhibit of work done over the last 50+ years as a full-time sculptor.

The show was held in the foyer of the 11th floor of a building in central Melbourne, Australia, which houses over 200 hundred barristers. The venue has been an exhibition space for some years and has become well known.

The exhibit consisted of 31 exhibition medals and 13 large commissioned medals mounted on the wall. It featured a display case of struck commissioned medals, some older cast exhibition medals, medals done for the US Society of Medalists and BAMS, and his two AMY Award medals.

It also showed 32 exhibition sculptures of domestic scale and two large panels of mounted photos of 30 large public sculptures. The response to the show has been very positive, with some sales of sculpture and cast medals, as well as the likelihood of a large sculpture commission.

The show is a re-run of one which was opened in a different venue in early August 2021, but which closed after 3 days due to an 11-week Covid lockdown and never re-opened.

1969

Shellfish

1988

Dante And The Giant

2007

Bus Stop - Wet Day

1959

Portrait of his father Andor Mészáros, by Michael Meszaros

Michael began making portrait medals at the age of 13 under the influence of his father Andor Mészáros, also a professional sculptor. He continued to make portrait medals while at school, and at university, while studying architecture, he began making expressive medals. After finishing his architecture course he was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study medallic sculpture at La Scuola Dell'Arte della Medaglia (School of the Art of the Medal) in the Mint of Rome in 1969.

He has lived as a full time sculptor in Australia since his return from Rome in early 1970, producing hundreds of medals (portraits, commissions and exhibition medals), 38 major public and private commissioned sculptures, reliefs, portrait heads, and a large body of exhibition sculpture.

1970

Escape

1986

The Smithkline Beecham Research Award For Infectious Diseases

1990

The Gospel According To The Medal

2012

Environmental Impact

ANDOR MESZAROS 1900-1972

A SCULPTOR'S LEGACY

Michael Meszaros

Andor Mészáros, architect, sculptor and medalist, was born in Budapest into a middle class family, the son of Alexander Mészáros, a solicitor, and his wife Bertha, nee Grunsberg, a well known sculptress.

For my father to make a living as a sculptor in Melbourne in the 1940's, 50's and 60's was an amazing achievement, especially as he was classified as an enemy alien refugee. He had to get a permit from the police to travel out of the suburb in which he lived every time he wanted to move around the city. He got friendly with the local sergeant and asked if he could apply for a permanent permit. After a while, the sergeant gave him the permanent permit and said, ' Someone higher up seems to think that you are OK.' It is still pretty tricky living as a sculptor, but nothing near as hard as it was in 1940.

I am very proud of my father. I have modelled my career on his example to a great degree, particularly in the mental processes I follow to find designs. I also learn how to conduct the business of living as a sculptor/medallist from watching his successes, trials and tribulations. As it all happened in our family apartment, and later the family house, I saw all this at close quarters. I used to go on road trips when he placed major works in other cities and I observed how it all happened. Thus, I was immersed in the sculpture atmosphere from my earliest memories and I used to think that this was quite normal. Clearly it was not, but by the time I realised that, it was part of me.

While my work grew out of his example, I have followed my own path which grew from the process rather than from the style. I instinctively allowed my own ideas and personality to work. Perhaps my portrait medals are the closest to my father's example (which was quite outstanding), and my commissioned medals utilise a similar analytic thinking process. But, the end results are rather different. Additionally, I have learnt a number of techniques my father never used, particularly in fabrication, which has enabled a range of work very different from anything he did and this has made much of my major public work very different.

Both of us having architecture degrees gave us a common grounding in design problem solving in a way that art schools do not teach.

Michael & Andor
1959

1947

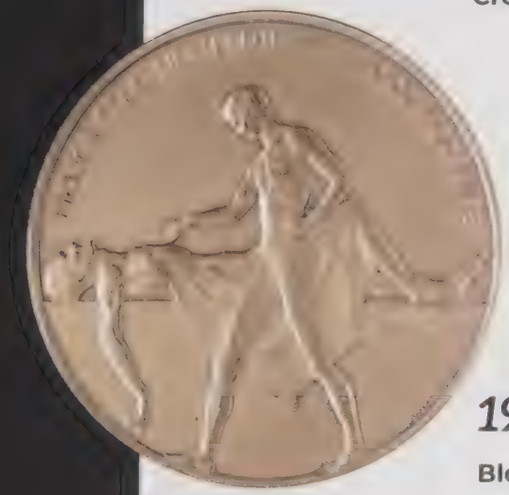
King George V Hospital for Mothers & Babies

I am very proud of the fact that we are the only father and son combination to have both won the FIDEM Grand Prix

"The medallion is to sculpture what the sonnet is to poetry." - Andor Meszaros

1948

Station of the Cross



1948

Blood Donors Medal

1970

James Cook

1967

Australian Dollar

I feel that my work generally reflects my time in history, just as my father's work reflects his period. We both set out to make work which conveyed relevant ideas in comprehensible ways. Neither of us was much concerned with art fashions of the day. Fashions come and go fairly quickly, so good art needs to go beyond fashionable style and concentrate on meaning and communication

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The Mészáros family moved to Vienna in 1919, where Andor studied building engineering at the Technische Hochschule. In 1923 he spent two years in Paris attending sculpture courses at Académie Julian and at night learned carving techniques at the studio of compatriot József Csáky who was among the forerunners of cubism in sculpture. Andor had the good fortune to meet and discuss modern art with greats like Picasso, Braque, Cézanne and Modigliani. Their concepts influenced him on abstract and cubist forms.

In 1927 he completed his architecture studies at the Budapesti Műszaki Egyetem. He worked as architect and married Elizabeth in 1932. His heart however was in monumental sculpture, including the miniaturized form of it: medals. Anticipating a disastrous war in Europe he emigrated to Melbourne, Australia in 1939. The following year his wife and son Daniel joined him.

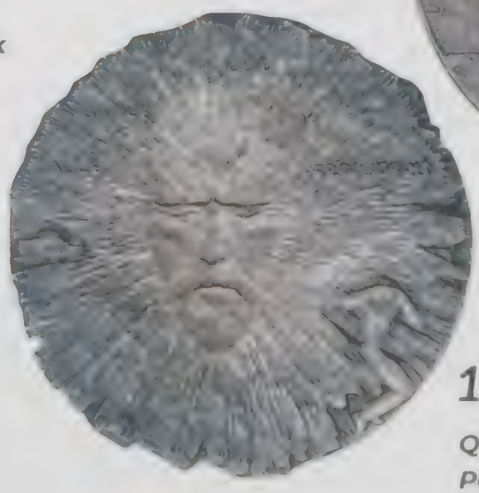
When bigger commissions were lacking, Mészáros turned his hand to medals, then an undeveloped field of art in Australia. He produced more than one thousand, including for the Olympic Games (1956).

Andor was a member of FIDEM; the Amici Della Medaglia, Italy; the Victorian Sculptors' Society (president 1954-55, 1962-63); and the Association of Sculptors of Victoria (president 1968).

Survived by his wife and two sons, he died on 1 May 1972 in South Melbourne.

1962

Winegrowers



1968

Quid Saule Persequeris

RECENT WORK

Jim Licaretz

The medal is a potent method for artists to make statements or raise awareness about issues they feel strongly about; especially world altering issues such as the environment and the extinction of plants, animals and ultimately humanity.

Since the birth of AMSA, the medal in America has changed significantly. For the first three quarters of the 20th century, almost all medals made in America were institutional, commercial or awards. Artists now give themselves the right to choose the subject of their medals. Perhaps the most important movement in the art of the medal was the empowerment of artists freeing themselves from commercial mints and making their own casts and fabricated medals.

Jeffrey Briggs in his recent series 'Sixth Extinction' has used the medal as a current day Cassandra. And he has chosen a whopper of a subject: World extinction. At this point in time, most inhabitants of the civilized world have heard countless warnings, which doesn't seem to have made a significant difference. The frustration and outrage around the lack of urgency on climate change, not to mention other ongoing crucial dilemmas are an impetus for those of us who make medals to share our views with others and continue to press for a robust response, begin a conversation on solutions and press for a collective movement toward a better world.

SIXTH EXTINCTION MEDAL SERIES

INTRODUCTION

Eugene Daub

To quote the artist Forrest Kirk "Art is on the front lines of social change, challenging people's core beliefs".

The simple act of making a medal is a release of pent-up frustration. It is also a way to participate and voice our views. I have always admired activists who march and demonstrate with their presence. In fact, I have a measure of guilt for not having done more of it. Jeffrey Briggs reminds us that making metals is a powerful force to combat indifference and remind us of the dangers of inaction. If you haven't already, make a medal about something you believe in. It's easier than marching and you can do it at home.Seize the opportunity and make some medallic noise.

SIXTH EXTINCTION MEDAL SERIES

MEDALS WITH A MISSION

Jeff Briggs

I am a new artist in the world of art medals. I freely admit I am following my wife's established reputation in the field. Perhaps because I was new, I looked upon medals as a means of communication. Eugene's listing of the three traditional categories for medals to me are all means of conveying messages. Since nearly all the personal art pieces I have created in my lifetime have had one theme – the environmental deterioration taking place around us – creating protest medals seemed a logical extension of that effort.

Human beings are primarily visual creatures. No matter how intensely we read about a subject matter, if a visual image accompanies it, the impact is far greater. There is a long history of imagery becoming the only means of conveying information to the masses. Religion is a good example. I have found that placing a protest medal in an individual's hand makes them focus on that subject matter more intently. This is the power of the medal.

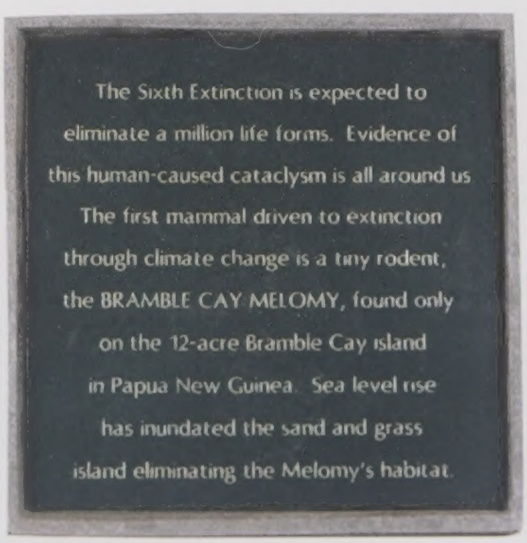
Eugene's reference to me as a Cassandra – in Greek mythology, a rhetorical device to indicate a person whose accurate prophecies of impending disasters are not believed – points out the frustration for those of us who are pressing the alarm. The problem is it is very difficult to get human beings to appreciate and undertake the scale of change and innovation that we now need. The cognitive dissonance or rejecting information that challenges preconceptions, is part of the slowly descending disasters affecting our planet. It is just slow enough so that we can be complacent and be in denial about it.

Basically, the message is simple - our incessant tinkering with nature's operating systems has resulted in an unintended human stewardship of the earth. The reality of this management task will require all of us to understand the sacrifices necessary.

The Sixth Extinction Medal Series illustrates one of those disasters. During the last half billion years, there have been five major mass extinctions when the diversity of life on earth has plummeted dramatically. Currently the six extinction is occurring around us. This time the cataclysm is human caused. It is still too early to say if this current extinction will reach the proportions of the previous five.

It is estimated that one-third of all reef building corals, one third of freshwater mollusks, a third of sharks and rays, one quarter of all mammals, a fifth of all reptiles, and a sixth of all birds are headed toward oblivion.

The inspiration for the medallion series is the book "THE SIXTH EXTINCTION" written by Elizabeth Kolbert. A number of the creatures she chronicles in her book are subject matters for the medallion series. In the book, she argues that there should be a separate category for human caused extinction – that we are creatures outside of the natural order to cause a cataclysm of this scale.


The Sixth Extinction is expected to
eliminate a million life forms. Evidence of
this human-caused cataclysm is all around us
The first mammal driven to extinction
through climate change is a tiny rodent,
the BRAMBLE CAY MELOMY, found only
on the 12-acre Bramble Cay island
in Papua New Guinea. Sea level rise
has inundated the sand and grass
island eliminating the Melomy's habitat.

The PINTA ISLAND TORTOISE was mostly wiped out due to hunting in the 19th century. The last remaining male - "Lonesome George" died of old age in 2012

The PYRENEAN IBEX became extinct because of habitat destruction, poaching, disease, and human introduction of other herbivores to the Spanish Mountains.

The ARABIAN LEOPARD, native to the Arabian Peninsula, is listed as extinct in the wild. It has dwindled due to habitat destruction, prey depletion, unregulated hunting, and trapping for the wildlife trade.

The PANAMANIAN GOLDEN FROG extinction is traced to the Chytrid Fungus, transported worldwide by frogs used in human pregnancy testing.

Found only in the Yangtze River, the BAIJI DOLPHIN declined drastically in the 1980's when China industrialized and exploited the river for fishing, transportation, and hydroelectricity.

WORKING WITH TRADITIONAL MODELING WAX

Ross Pollard

Traditional modeling wax is a great sculpting medium for diminutive bas-reliefs, such as the one shown here. Wax is capable of holding fine detail and has a long pedigree in the medallic arts, stretching back to the Renaissance. The following 3-step recipe is made with simple ingredients available at most art supply stores.

Step 1. Melt some beeswax in a double boiler with a little dry pigment and Venice turpentine. I use approximately 1/2 teaspoon of Venice turpentine for every 1/2 cup of beeswax pellets, but the ratio can be adjusted to suit your own needs and preferences. In this case, I colored my wax with a pinch of titanium dioxide. Natural ochres and iron oxide pigments also work, although dark colors should be avoided as they obscure shadows and make modeling difficult.

Step 2. Test the consistency of the wax. Pour some of the melted mixture into a cup of cold water and form it into a ball. If it feels too stiff, stir in more Venice turpentine. If it is too soft, add more beeswax.

Step 3. When the consistency is to your liking, strain the wax into a wide-mouth jar and let it cool to room temperature. Prior to use, scoop wax from the jar with a modeling tool and knead till softened. Modeling tools can be lubricated with a little olive oil if you find them sticking to the wax.

BROOKGREEN MEDAL 2022

by J.D. Welsh

Obverse: "Days of Silence" - features a lazing American alligator amid falling sunlight, garlands of stylized toad eggs, river oats and three Southern toad tadpoles.

Reverse: "Nights of Song" - features a chorusing Southern toad, three fireflies and various firefly halos, a crescent moon, a water prairie with lily pads and one water lily blossom, three fallen pickerelweed blossoms and one river birch leaf.

The Annual Brookgreen Medal series is in its 50th year, having been established by Brookgreen Trustee and renowned sculptor Paul Jennewein in 1972. Each medal depicts one of three themes chosen by the sculptor: "The Sculptor at Work", "History of South Carolina", and "Flora and Fauna of the Southeast". Each year, medals are only available to members at the President's Council level and higher.

Days of Silence, by Connecticut-born artist Jeremiah D. Welsh, features a lazing American alligator viewed from below the water's surface with daylight fracturing and filtering into the surrounding water. The sculptor chose to position the view below the water's surface in this design as part of his artistic passion to "look beneath the surface of things".

From JD Welsh:

"I have spent a fair bit of time in wetlands and swamps and the one thing that has always struck me is that during the daylight hours there is a spirit of stillness in these places. A spirit of stillness though that is pulsing with potential energy and percolating with productivity and life. As light falls, however, this energy is transformed - bursting into a resonating chorus and reverberating with splashes, movement and calls."